

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07
FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 EPG-02 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00
LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 FEA-01 OES-07 /056 W
-----076490 062340Z /66

R 061718Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0699
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY MADRID

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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EEC (BELGIUM)
SUBJ: BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER LISTS PRIORITIES FOR
BELGIAN EC PRESIDENCY

REF: BRUSSELS 6774

1. SUMMARY: IN WIDE RANGING ADDRESS TO EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT IN LUXEMBOURG JULY 6, BELGIAN FOREIGN
MINISTER HENRI SIMONET SPELLED OUT PRIORITIES FOR THE
SIX MONTHS OF BELGIAN EC PRESIDENCY WHICH BEGAN JULY 1.
SPEECH WAS COMPETENT RECOUNTING OF PROBLEMS AND HOPES
FACING THE COMMUNITY, BUT BROKE NO NEW GROUND. SIMONET
EMPHASIZED PARTICULARLY THE IMPORTANCE OF GREATER
COORDINATION OF EC MEMBER STATES MONETARY AND BUDGETARY
POLICIES TO COMBAT INFLATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT. HE HOPED
FOR PROGRESS ON MTN BY THE END OF THE YEAR. END SUMMARY.

2. SIMONET SAID BELGIUM WILL CONCENTRATE ON THREE
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POLITICAL ISSUES DURING ITS PRESIDENCY: (A) PREPARATIONS
FOR DIRECT ELECTIONS OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. HE
ASSERTED THAT A DIRECTLY ELECTED PARLIAMENT SHOULD
"MAKE ITSELF FELT MORE IN THE DAY TO DAY PROCESS OF
FASHIONING EUROPE," AND SHOULD "ONE DAY BECOME A
PARLIAMENT WITH ALL POWERS, BOTH A LEGISLATIVE BODY AND
A CHECK ON THE EUROPEAN EXECUTIVE." SIMONET ALSO

PROMISED TO PROMOTE A GREATER "COLLABORATION AND CLIMATE OF MUTUAL CONFIDENCE" BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND THE PARLIAMENT OVER NEXT SIX MONTHS. (B) EUROPEAN UNION. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT WITH THEIR ATTENTION FOCUSED ON CURRENT ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS, EC MEMBER STATES HAVE LITTLE EXCESS ENERGY TO DEVOTE TO CAUSE OF EUROPE'S FURTHER POLITICAL UNIFICATION, SIMONET SAID BELGIUM HOPES NONETHELESS THAT DURING ITS PRESIDENCY THE COMMUNITY CAN MAKE SOME PROGRESS TOWARD UNIFICATION, EVEN IF SLIGHT, ALONG LINES SKETCHED OUT IN THE TINDEMANS REPORT.

(C) COMMUNITY ENLARGEMENT. EC'S RESPONSE TO GREEK, PORTUGUESE AND PROBABLE SPANISH HOPES FOR ACCESSION MUST BE POSITIVE. HOWEVER, INSTITUTIONAL, ECONOMIC AND OTHER PROBLEMS BEARING ON EC'S ENLARGEMENT MUST BE CAREFULLY EXAMINED AND SOLUTIONS FOUND.

3. SIMONET UNDERScoreD IMPORTANCE, EVEN IN PRESENT DIFFICULT ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES, OF WORKING TOWARD THB COMMUNITY'S LONG-TERM GOAL OF ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION. HE SAID THAT TO FIGHT INFLATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT, THE BELGIANS WILL TRY TO PERSUADE THE COMMUNITY TO: (A) TAKE MEASURES DESIGNED TO REDUCE ECONOMIC, MONETARY AND STRUCTURAL DIVERGENCES AMONG MEMBER STATES, AND (B) "TO PRESENT A UNITED FRONT IN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND MONETARY DEBATES." TO REDUCE MEMBER STATE DIVER-
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GENCES, SIMONET CALLED FOR INCREASED COORDINATION OF MEMBER STATE MONETARY AND BUDGETARY POLICIES AND THE ADJUSTMENT OF COMMUNITY CREDIT MECHANISMS. SIMONET ASKED THAT THERE BE AN INCREASE IN MEDIUM-TERM CREDIT AVAILABLE TO THE COMMUNITY, BUT ALSO SAID THAT MORE PRECISE LENDING CRITERIA SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED (IN A PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING HIS ADDRESS, SIMONET RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO REPORTER'S QUERY WHETHER BELGIAN PRESIDENCY IS ENDORSING COMMISSION PRESIDENT JENKINS' RECOMMENDATION FOR CREATION OF NEW COMMUNITY LENDING MECHANISM).

4. EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING A COHERENT, COMPREHENSIVE EC ENERGY POLICY, SIMONET SAID THAT COMMUNITY SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON FOUR MAIN AREAS: (A) THE DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR ENERGY; (B) THE USE OF COAL; (C) RATIONAL USE OF ENERGY; AND (D) INVESTMENT IN NEW FORMS OF ENERGY. HE COMMENTED THAT IN ADDRESSING THE QUESTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR POWER, THE COMMUNITY IS FACED WITH "THE PARTICULARLY DELICATE PROBLEM
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OF THE EFFECTS OF THE NEW AMERICAN POLICY".SIMONET
SPECULATED THAT THE U.S. POLICY ANNOUNCED APRIL 7
"COULD HOLD UP THE INSTALLATION OF OUR OWN ELECTRO-
NUCLEAR CAPACITY AND INDEED PROVE A THREAT TO THE
SOLIDARITY OF THE COMMUNITY."

5. AS REGARDS THE COMMUNITY'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS, THE
BELGIAN FONMIN URGED THE COMPLETION OF EC FISHERY
NEGOTIATIONS WITH EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES BY THE END OF

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R 061718Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
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1977. HE SAID THE MTN "SHOULD NOW ENTER A PARTICULARLY
ACTIVE STAGE" AND CALLED FOR PROGRESS TOWARD CONCLUSION
OF THE NEGOTIATIONS; "IT'S PROBABLY WISER NOT TO BE TOO
OPTIMISTIC (I.E., ABOUT CONCLUDING MTN BY THE ORIGINAL
DECEMBER 31, 1977 DEADLINE), BUT THERE DOES SEEM TO BE
A REASONABLE CHANCE OF MAKING SOME SERIOUS PROGRESS IN
THE COURSE OF THIS YEAR. THIS IS IN ANY CASE ONE OF
THE PRIMARY AIMS OF THE COMMUNITY AND THEREFORE OF THE
BELGIAN PRESIDENCY." HINTON

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